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## Hanford Cleanup Fact Sheet

### THE HANFORD CLEANUP AND COMPLIANCE AGREEMENT

#### BACKGROUND

More than 45 years of chemical and radioactive wastes have accumulated at the Hanford nuclear site in South Central Washington. The Hanford Cleanup and Compliance Agreement is a 30-year plan for cleaning up those wastes and bringing Hanford hazardous waste facilities into compliance with state and federal environmental laws.

The U. S. Department of Energy (DOE), which operates the site, is planning to begin the cleanup of its waste sites and to obtain federal/state permits for treating, storing and disposing of hazardous wastes. Two regulatory agencies, the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Washington State Department of Ecology, will oversee DOE's actions under federal and state waste cleanup and management laws.

#### TYPES OF WASTES

Hanford's nuclear reactors and chemical processing plants have generated a variety of wastes. Some of the wastes contain radioactive materials, some contain chemical materials (called hazardous wastes) but the majority of wastes are a mixture of radioactive and chemical materials and are called mixed wastes. Many of these wastes have contaminated soils and ground water beneath Hanford.

#### CLEANUP PLANS

The agreement commits the Department of Energy to meeting a series of milestones over the next 30 years. Projects dealing with health and/or environmental safety concerns are given top priority in the milestones. A variety of methods will be used, including immobilizing liquid wastes by mixing it with a concrete-like substance or by turning it into glass. Testing and development of new technology will be required to clean up portions of the wastes.

#### HOW YOU CAN GET MORE INFORMATION OR BE INVOLVED

You can obtain more information or get on the Hanford mailing list by contacting: Claire Rowlett, U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, (206) 442-1099; Jerry Gilliland, Washington Department of Ecology, (206) 459-6674; or Ken Morgan, U. S. Department of Energy, (509) 376-7501. A list of regional libraries with copies of agreement documents also is available.

You will be notified and may wish to attend the quarterly public meetings on the Hanford Agreement planned throughout the region.